

# NEWS FROM ED MARKEY

**United States Congress**

**Massachusetts Seventh District**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **MARKEY: TSA SHOULD HIRE BOXCUTTER STUDENT**

**WASHINGTON, DC**— Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), a senior member of the House Select Committee on Homeland Security, released the following statement regarding the pre-trial for Nathaniel Heatwole, a college student who further exposed the massive security failures at the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

Rep. Markey said, "The work of this well-intentioned college student exposes serious flaws in America's passenger plane security. Nathaniel Heatwole is warning the TSA that the front door of passenger planes remains unlocked and exposed to terrorists like Al Qaeda who would like nothing more than to carry out another September 11<sup>th</sup> style attack."

"As a punishment for breaking the law, this college student should be sentenced to working 20 hours a week for the TSA. The TSA's punishment for this massive failure should be listening to this 20 year old student – and subsequently closing loopholes that continue to worry passengers everyday. Finally, Southwest Airlines should be investigated for its pre-flight searches and preparation -- where else can a passenger hide questionable or dangerous materials but in a bathroom or under a seat in an airplane?" Rep. Markey asked.

"TSA has cut 6,000 screeners; it continues to allow cargo to be loaded onto passenger planes with NO physical screening or inspection; it has failed to complete background checks on many of its own employees; and it does not even require workers with access to planes to be routinely screened when they report to work," Rep. Markey said. "Moreover, it seems that TSA doesn't even read its mail or e-mail."

Rep. Markey has introduced the Universal Screening of Air Cargo Act (USA Cargo Act), H.R. 2455 requiring the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to implement physical screening and inspection of air cargo on passenger planes. Rep. Markey's amendment to force TSA to screen all cargo on passenger planes to the Homeland Security spending bill was passed by an overwhelming margin in the House of Representatives in June (274-147). But it was deleted by the Republican Congressional leadership behind closed doors in the Conference Committee, and signed by the President at the beginning of October.

More information on airline security can be found at [www.house.gov/markey](http://www.house.gov/markey).